

**Princeton Township
Mille Lacs County, Minnesota**

Township Board Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, February 16, 2021

Minutes

The February monthly meeting of the Princeton Township Board was called to order by Chairman Gene Stoeckel at 7:30 p.m. Due to COVID restrictions the meeting was held by teleconference.

Supervisors attending: Thomas Duden, Gene Stoeckel, Bill Whitcomb, John Wilhelm

Supervisor absent: Dan Hiller

Also attending: Zoning Administrator Scott Richards, Township Engineer Todd McLouth, Township Attorney Jason Hill, Clerk-Treasurer Doug Dahl

All attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Open Forum

Chairman Stoeckel addressed rumors involving the Silver Lake Oaks development, noting that the Township has always had adequate escrow funds from the developer to cover its costs, that the project had been held up due to a tardy letter of credit, and that the letter of credit has been received.

Video link to February meeting:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kITRN3GsSLg>

Approve Minutes

January 19 regular meeting:

Mr. Duden moved to approve the minutes of the January 19 monthly meeting. Seconded by Mr. Whitcomb.

Mr. Stoeckel called the roll: Mr. Duden—Aye; Mr. Stoeckel—Aye; Mr. Whitcomb—Aye; Mr. Wilhelm—Aye. Motion carried.

Clerk-Treasurer Report

Cash control statement:

General Fund beginning balance for January:	\$169,914.70
Receipts	\$ 11,926.15
Disbursements	\$ 15,863.20
Ending balance	\$165,977.65

Road & Bridge Fund beginning balance for January:	\$145,460.48
Receipts:	\$ 2,958.97
Disbursements	\$ 8,132.64
Ending balance	\$140,286.81

Mr. Duden moved to approve the January cash control statement. Seconded by Mr. Stoeckel.

Mr. Stoeckel called the roll: Mr. Duden—Aye; Mr. Stoeckel—Aye; Mr. Whitcomb—Aye; Mr. Wilhelm—Aye. Motion carried.

Payroll: Net pay distribution—January net payroll: \$3,404.53
Mr. Whitcomb moved to approve the January payroll. Seconded by Mr. Stoeckel.

Mr. Stoeckel called the roll: Mr. Duden—Aye; Mr. Stoeckel—Aye; Mr. Whitcomb—Aye; Mr. Wilhelm—Aye. Motion carried.

Claims for approval: Total claims \$25,046.24
Mr. Duden moved to approve the claims list. Seconded by Mr. Stoeckel.

Mr. Stoeckel called the roll: Mr. Duden—Aye; Mr. Stoeckel—Aye; Mr. Whitcomb—Aye; Mr. Wilhelm—Aye. Motion carried.

Progress report: 2020 audit by Schlenner Wenner & Co.:
Mr. Dahl reported that the audit is proceeding. He has provided all documentation that the auditor has called for. Field work is scheduled to begin February 17.

Mille Lacs County Economic Relief Program:
Mr. Stoeckel read the announcement about the County Economic Relief Program. Deadline for applications is Friday, February 19.

Zoning Administrator's Report: Scott Richards

Zoning Amendments – Cul-de-sacs and Lot Width Requirements – Ordinance Second Reading and Approval. Approval of Summary Resolution:

Mr. Richards was not present for discussion of this question because of a conflict. Chairman Stoeckel brought the issue before the board. In his memo to the board Mr. Richards reviewed the history of the discussion and development of the zoning amendments through the Planning Commission and Town Board. At its January 19 meeting the Town Board waived first reading of the amendments and set the second reading for the February meeting. Mr. Richards recommended that the Town Board waive second reading and adopt the Ordinance and Summary Resolution as proposed.

Mr. Whitcomb moved that the Town Board waive second reading, and adopt Ordinance 2021 – 2, Amending the Zoning Ordinance to add a definition of Building Setback Line, clarifying lot width requirements at the Ordinary High-Water Mark in the Zoning Districts, and amending the allowance for cul-de-sacs in the River Conservation District. He further moved adoption of Resolution 2021-4 approving the Summary Ordinance for Ordinance 2021 – 2. Seconded by Mr. Duden.

Mr. Stoeckel called the roll: Mr. Duden—Aye; Mr. Stoeckel—Aye; Mr. Whitcomb—Aye; Mr. Wilhelm—Aye. Motion carried.

Old Business

Resolution approving work on 50th Street & LRIP application:

Wyanette Township Board has passed a resolution to approve sharing engineering expenses for improvements on 50th Avenue (County Line Road) with the stipulation that the Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) grant is approved for the project.

Mr. Duden moved to adopt the shared road-improvement agreement offered by Wyanette Township and Princeton Township Resolution 2021-6 authorizing the shared agreement and directing the Township to submit the LRIP grant application to the State. Seconded by Mr. Whitcomb.

Mr. Stoeckel called the roll: Mr. Duden—Aye; Mr. Stoeckel—Aye; Mr. Whitcomb—Aye; Mr. Wilhelm—Aye. Motion carried.

Review Brickton Road overlay quotes:

Mr. Whitcomb and Township Engineer Todd McLouth described the condition of the road section under consideration, and the improvement work contemplated in the proposal. Mr. Whitcomb confirmed that the project includes only the section that is currently paved, and will not extend into the gravel portion to the north of A-Z Restaurant Equipment.

Mr. Duden moved to table discussion of the Brickton Road project to the March 23 meeting. Seconded by Mr. Whitcomb.

Mr. Stoeckel called the roll: Mr. Duden—Aye; Mr. Stoeckel—Aye; Mr. Whitcomb—Aye; Mr. Wilhelm—Aye. Motion carried.

Review quotes from grading and road-repair contractors:

Mr. Stoeckel reported the details of two quotes: one from Hass Construction for grading, one from Dahlheimer Trucking & Excavating for road repair. Mr. Whitcomb noted that requests for quotes were solicited via advertising. These were the only two quotes the Township received.

Mr. Whitcomb moved to accept the grading quote from Keith Hass Construction. Seconded by Mr. Duden.

Mr. Stoeckel called the roll: Mr. Duden—Aye; Mr. Stoeckel—Aye; Mr. Whitcomb—Aye; Mr. Wilhelm—Aye. Motion carried.

Mr. Whitcomb moved to accept the road-repair quote from Dahlheimer & Son Trucking & Excavating. Seconded by Mr. Duden.

Mr. Stoeckel called the roll: Mr. Duden—Aye; Mr. Stoeckel—Aye; Mr. Whitcomb—Aye; Mr. Wilhelm—Aye. Motion carried.

Status of Northern Natural Gas Access Request:

Township Attorney Jason Hill reported that the Northern Natural Gas project is more complex than the original request indicated. In addition to the driveway access permit the work will require a building permit to cover modifications to the existing structure; it will also require either a conditional use permit or an exception from the CUP for a public utility. The company is preparing applications based on those needs, and will submit them to the Township when they are ready. There is no action required on the application at this time.

Mr. Whitcomb moved to table the question until the March meeting. Seconded by Mr. Duden.

Mr. Stoeckel called the roll: Mr. Duden—Aye; Mr. Stoeckel—Aye; Mr. Whitcomb—Aye; Mr. Wilhelm—Aye. Motion carried.

Status of tree-removal permission letters:

Mr. Whitcomb reported that both property owners effected by the targeted trees have been contacted and have given their approval to remove the trees. The plan is to remove them soon after the snow melts. The job will be done by Township employees. No Board action is required to complete the work.

Election and Annual Meeting notice to township residents:

Mr. Whitcomb moved to approve the Notice of Election, Annual Meeting, Public Accuracy Test, and Board of Canvass as offered in draft form to the Board. Seconded by Mr. Duden.

Mr. Stoeckel called the roll: Mr. Duden—Aye; Mr. Stoeckel—Aye; Mr. Whitcomb—Aye; Mr. Wilhelm—Aye. Motion carried.

At the January meeting the Town Board voted to publish the Township Annual Newsletter before the election in order to include information about the election and the annual meeting. Upon further discussion the Board concluded that sending the election and annual meeting notice to Township residents via postcard would be preferable.

Mr. Stoeckel moved to rescind the motion made at the January 19 meeting to deliver the Annual Newsletter by March 2, and to delay delivery until after the election. Seconded by Mr. Whitcomb.

Mr. Stoeckel called the roll: Mr. Duden—Aye; Mr. Stoeckel—Aye; Mr. Whitcomb—Aye; Mr. Wilhelm—Aye. Motion carried.

Mr. Whitcomb moved to send the published notice of election to Township residents via postcard. Seconded by Mr. Stoeckel.

Mr. Stoeckel called the roll: Mr. Duden—Aye; Mr. Stoeckel—Aye; Mr. Whitcomb—Aye; Mr. Wilhelm—Aye. Motion carried.

Resolution to hold the 2021 Annual Meeting by Electronic Means:

Mr. Duden moved to approve Resolution 2021-5 to hold the Annual Meeting by Electronic Means. Seconded by Mr. Whitcomb.

Mr. Stoeckel called the roll: Mr. Duden—Aye; Mr. Stoeckel—Aye; Mr. Whitcomb—Aye; Mr. Wilhelm—Aye. Motion carried.

Clarify Town Hall open hours and Clerk-Treasurer schedule:

At Mr. Dahl's annual review, the Town Board voted to expand the Clerk-Treasurer's hours up to 30 hours per week. The motion called for the Town Hall to be open on Wednesday in addition to the standard schedule of Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. However, Mr. Dahl has found that he often must work on Friday to accommodate the needs of the Township. He therefore requested to change the Wednesday hours to flexible time to be used either Wednesday or Friday.

Mr. Stoeckel moved to change the schedule from specifically on Wednesday to allow for flexibility in the additional time. Seconded by Mr. Whitcomb.

Mr. Stoeckel called the roll: Mr. Duden—Aye; Mr. Stoeckel—Aye; Mr. Whitcomb—Aye; Mr. Wilhelm—Aye. Motion carried.

Supervisors' Reports

Road report—Bill Whitcomb

Due to personnel changes at the County, the County ditch project has been delayed until late March. Mr. Whitcomb will discuss the specifics of the types of pipe to be installed with the Township Engineer.

Mr. Duden reported that Township residents appreciate the snowplowing information that is being posted online. He noted that a new house has been built on 65th Street east of 110th Avenue. He recommended adding that section of road to the regular snowplowing list, perhaps in cooperation with Greenbush Township.

Fire Board Liaison Report—Bill Whitcomb

No Fire Board meeting last month. No fire contract received yet.

Airport Commission Liaison Report—Gene Stoeckel

The Airport Commission is not meeting due to the resignation of the City Administrator. The city has now hired a new administrator.

City Planning Commission Liaison Report—Gene Stoeckel

A notice sent out about an annexation of property to the City of Princeton indicated the parcel in question was in Baldwin Township. However, the parcel is part of Princeton Township. Mr. Stoeckel will raise the question of compensation to the Township for forfeited tax revenue as provided by Minnesota statute.

Township Planning Commission Liaison Report—Dave Persing

Mr. Hiller asked Mr. Persing to give a report due to Mr. Hiller's planned absence from the meeting. Ongoing issues under discussion are home occupations and electronic signs.

New Business

Resolution to hold the Annual Meeting remotely:

Due to the Governor's COVID19 meeting restrictions the Minnesota Association of Townships advised passing a resolution to hold the 2021 Annual Town Meeting remotely.

Mr. Duden moved to adopt Resolution 2020-5 to conduct the 2021 Annual Meeting remotely. Seconded by Mr. Whitcomb.

Mr. Stoeckel called the roll: Mr. Duden—Aye; Mr. Stoeckel—Aye; Mr. Whitcomb—Aye; Mr. Wilhelm—Aye. Motion carried.

Other Business

Add Chamber of Commerce Liaison as a supervisor duty:

Mr. Duden suggested that the Township and its businesses could benefit from having a supervisor as a regular liaison to the Chamber of Commerce. Will continue discussing the question at future meetings.

New rate schedule from Loucks for Township Engineer services:

Todd McLouth notified the Board of some increases in fees from his company. Mr. Stoeckel called for comments/concerns about the new fee list. Mr. Duden thanked Mr. McLouth for his work in preparing a long-term plan for road maintenance/improvements in the Township. Other supervisors also expressed their appreciation for Mr. McLouth's work.

Adjourn

Bill Whitcomb moved to adjourn. Seconded by Thomas Duden.

Mr. Stoeckel called the roll: Mr. Duden—Aye; Mr. Stoeckel—Aye; Mr. Whitcomb—Aye; Mr. Wilhelm—Aye. Motion carried.

Adjourned 9:40 p.m.

Attendees

Marcia Anderson, Andrea Gerrard, Kylie Gerth, Cyndi MacDonald, Bonnie Nelson, David Persing, Barry Ramage, Jr., plus unidentified callers

Respectfully submitted,
Doug Dahl, Clerk-Treasurer